

Statement of Purpose

Soliat Bada

I've always believed that creativity and joy should be at the forefront in choosing a career path. As the lines between work and personal life constantly blur, I believe that a successful career should be about personal fulfilment, impact and growth. This belief has been my guiding principle through life and has led me to discover my passion for cooking, from which I find both joy and fulfilment. Among many other things, what I love about cooking is the challenge of delicately combining several different ingredients to create a delicious, wholesome meal. So far, with cooking, I have discovered that creativity and skill go hand in hand, and I thrive on the challenge not only to recreate what already exists but also to build on it and create something more.

My quest to explore the indigenous flavours of my continent Africa led me to move to Nigeria, where I accomplished my dream of starting my own business, a gourmet wings speciality restaurant named **Byrd**. My vision with **Byrd** is to significantly contribute to the African food industry by raising the standards for customer service and food presentation, thereby opening African cuisine to the global audience. To me, cooking is more than just food; it is a journey of new discoveries and is the foundation of my cooking show “**Off The Menu**”, where I explore indigenous recipes and cooking methods with guests inspired by the rich continent of Africa. "Off the Menu" was born based on my understanding that good food is a unifier that brings people together because we can share our culture and heritage through food and give each other nourishment and memories that will probably last forever.

However, the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global lockdown merely accelerated a phenomenon that was already taking place - digital transformation across all industries, with the culinary industry holding no exception. In response to this, I launched my meal kit business during the lockdown - ‘**Nula’s Kitchen**’ providing excellent restaurant-style dining to the comfort of the home. My passion inspired me to give my customers the experience of dining outdoors despite the global lockdown. Through Nula’s Kitchen, I provide hygienic, healthy and easy to cook meal kits for families worldwide.

To me, cooking provides an unending opportunity for expanding knowledge and learning and having practised professionally, I have realised that all I have learnt so far have been very much the tip of the iceberg. I am therefore keen on expanding my knowledge and expertise in my current practice areas, and this is the reason I am very interested in undertaking a Diploma De Cuisine Course at Le Cordon Bleu. I understand that taking this course will grant me access to meet and interact with top tier world-class chefs and tutors, understand and learn their work culture, and be exposed to the level of excellence they operate in.

I earnestly desire to be exposed to like-minded professionals with whom I can trade ideas and learn several aspects of cooking, including the relevant soft skills and experience which shall be instrumental to the growth and success of my businesses. The top-notch culinary skills I will obtain from this course will immensely contribute to shaping me to become my vision of myself, as I have always been driven to be the best at whatever I set my mind to. I will be opportune to hone my culinary business skills such as professional communication, time management and group leadership, nutritional science, and the fundamental, timeless technique needed for a lifetime of culinary excellence. As I daily interact with fellow course mates, facilitators and tutors, I hope to expand my network, improve my thought process and assimilate other cultural practices like emotional intelligence, research and organisational skills that will advance my businesses in my home country Nigeria.

I hope to gain from this course, a thorough combination of fundamental cooking techniques, a diverse, exciting range of recipes, expand my professional skill set in the kitchen, deepen my understanding of cooking theory, and expand my knowledge surrounding food. I hold no doubt that undertaking this course in an internationally renowned institution as Le Cordon Bleu, will afford me the unique opportunity to learn from some of the most skilled and experienced teachers in the industry. I hope to be inspired by my tutors through their grounded, professional approach to teaching and cooking to achieve greater heights with my businesses and accomplish my dream of significantly contributing to the African food industry.